

HOUSING POLICY
DEVELOPMENT, HCD

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City of Lawndale

General Plan Annual Progress Report

Calendar Year 2007

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City of Lawndale
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1. Introduction

California law [Government Code § 65400(b)(1)] requires all jurisdictions to submit to their legislative bodies an annual report on the status of the general plan and progress toward its implementation. The planning agency that is responsible for investigating and recommending reasonable and practical means for implementing the general plan or elements of the general plan submits the annual report to the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) and the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) each year after it is endorsed or adopted by the legislative body. The City of Lawndale's planning agency is the Planning Commission.

The intent of this law is to ensure that the jurisdiction's general plan serves as "an effective guide for orderly growth and development, preservation and conservation of open-space land and natural resources, and the efficient expenditure of public funds relating to the subjects addressed in the general plan" [Government Code § 65400(a)]. The City of Lawndale's General Plan includes nine elements: seven mandated elements and two optional elements. The Community Development Department maintains the General Plan and monitors its implementation. The Planning Commission and the City Council oversee the effectiveness and relevancy of the General Plan, and its implementation activities, through its annual review.

This Annual Report also describes the City's progress in meeting its regional housing needs over the current reporting period and describes local efforts to remove government constraints to the maintenance, improvement and development of housing to satisfy Government Code § 65400 (b)(2).

2. Structure of the General Plan

Table 1: City of Lawndale General Plan Elements

Element	Type	Year Adopted
Community Development		
Land Use	Mandated	1992
Circulation	Mandated	1992
Housing	Mandated	2001
Economic Development	Optional	1992
Resource Management		
Open Space	Mandated	1992
Conservation	Mandated	1992
Air Quality Management	Optional	1992
Hazard Management		
Safety	Mandated	1992
Noise	Mandated	1992

3. General Plan Amendments and Implementation Activities

In preparation for a comprehensive update of its 1992 General Plan, the City of Lawndale appropriated funds in the fiscal year 2007-2008 budget for an evaluation of the General Plan. The evaluation process is scheduled to begin in June 2008 with the issuance of a Request for Proposal to qualified consultants.

The following represents the progress the City has made towards implementing the goals and guiding policies of the General Plan during the reporting period.

Land Use Element

A staff initiated General Plan Amendment was completed in June 2007 to achieve consistency between the General Plan and the Zoning Ordinance. This minor amendment to the Land Use Element of the General Plan involved two adjustments:

- 1) An adjustment to the figures used to identify the density ranges of the residential land use designations such that (i) the density range figures utilized in the Land Use Element were consistent throughout the element, and (ii) the figures used in the General Plan were consistent with the figures used in the Zoning Ordinance.
- 2) A boundary adjustment on the General Plan land use map to re-designate certain properties from General Commercial to Multi-Family Medium Density. This re-designation created a land use map that more accurately reflects the existing conditions and realistic future development of these properties. This adjustment also correlated the Zoning Ordinance with the General Plan.

As with the appropriation of funds for a review of the General Plan, the FY 07/08 budget also included an appropriation for a comprehensive evaluation and update of the Zoning Code which will follow the review of the General Plan. In February 2007, the entire Sign Ordinance was amended in order to improve the physical appearance and safety of signage within the City and to keep the Sign Ordinance current with federal and state law.

As a way of improving the efficiency of development application processing, Lawndale began implementation in December 2007 of an automated system that incorporates property information, permits and inspections, planning, and code enforcement. The anticipated go-live date for the CityView solution is in October 2008. Development activity slowed in 2007 relative to the preceding years which included the peak of new home construction activity in 2005. The table below identifies major development applications processed during the reporting period.

Table 2: Development Activity

Project	Type of Development	# of Units	Completion Date
4542-48 W. 171 st St.	Res. Townhomes – Detached	4	2/7/07
4625-29 W. 172 nd St.	Res. Townhomes – Attached	3	6/22/07
16714 Inglewood Ave.	Res. Townhomes – Attached	4	12/7/07

Circulation Element

In June 2007, the City Council approved a 5-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for the period FY 07/08 – FY 11/12. CIP projects involving improvements to streets and sidewalks are heavily favored in the Capital Improvement Plan.

The 1992 Circulation Element recognized the severe parking problem in the City's residential neighborhoods. The element stated that, "Lawndale has parking deficiencies stemming from substandard street widths, narrow residential lots, existing high residential densities and, therefore, high vehicular activity, in addition to inadequate off-street parking requirements." In its efforts to find solutions to the City's parking problems, the Lawndale Parking Issues Committee was established by the City Council and recommended to the Council the implementation of a temporary parking permit district in 2007 to test the concept of permitted parking in residential areas. As a result of that test, an engineering consulting firm has been contracted to conduct a comprehensive parking study of the residentially zoned areas of Lawndale. The parking study will have a traffic study component which will include existing roadway geometry data, traffic flow patterns, traffic volumes, traffic control conditions, infrastructure conditions, etc., and will provide a starting point for the more advanced traffic analysis required for an update of the 1992 Circulation Element (date to be determined upon completion of the General Plan evaluation).

Housing Element

The current Housing Element covers the period of July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2008 (extended from June 30, 2005 by AB 2148). A new update is being undertaken for the cycle 2008-2014 and began in July 2007. As part of the public outreach for the Housing Element update, a study session was held with the Planning Commission in September 2007. Residents, service agencies and housing providers were invited to attend the session. A review of housing program progress and accomplishments was completed in December 2007. Following the update schedule, a draft 2008-2014 Housing Element will be submitted to the Department of Housing and Community Development by April 2008 for HCD's review. Adoption hearings by the City Council are scheduled for June 2008.

Housing Element implementation is further discussed in **Section 4. Housing Element Activity.**

Economic Development Element

In July 2007, the Redevelopment Agency entered into an Exclusive Negotiating Agreement with Festival Development Corporation for the development of Agency owned property on the City's premiere intersection of Hawthorne Boulevard and Manhattan Beach Boulevard. In February 2008, the Redevelopment Agency provided direction to Festival to further develop the concept of a "lifestyle center," whereby a public open space (e.g. courtyard) would be surrounded by nationally branded casual dining restaurants, coffee houses and retail establishments.

As part of the Compass Blueprint Planning Services program offered through the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG), Solimar Research Group conducted a study and prepared a report in 2007 on economic development strategies for the City of Lawndale. The report outlined four strategies for increasing sales tax generation in the City, but took a narrow focus on the City's main thoroughfare, Hawthorne Boulevard.

Open Space Element

Construction of the new 17,360 s.f. Lawndale Library began in July 2007 with a projected completion date sometime in December 2008. In conjunction with the library construction, the City's first public art project – murals painted by local kids – decorates the construction fencing.

In February 2007, the City Council gave direction to have a master plan prepared for the development of a new park in Lawndale. Although the site for Hopper Park may be relatively small at 0.5 acres (potentially 0.63 acres), development of the park helps to address the City's deficiency of open space. In August 2007, the City Council selected a site within the Civic Center Area for development of a new community center. Conceptual drawings and cost estimates had been prepared prior to site selection. A measure asking for voter approval to spend the funds to construct a new community center will be on the April 2008 election ballot.

Conservation Element

To promote the recycling of discards generated by construction projects within the City, a construction and demolition debris ordinance was adopted in January 2007 to establish regulations for the recycling of such discards (e.g. concrete, asphalt, wood). Projects that meet certain thresholds are required to have a Waste Reduction Recycling Plan to divert project-related construction and demolition debris to recycling facilities.

Air Quality Management Plan

The Air Quality Management Plan was adopted in 1992. A review of this plan will be performed as part of the General Plan evaluation scheduled for 2008.

Safety Element

The City of Lawndale has adopted the National Incident Management System (NIMS), which provides a consistent nationwide approach for federal, state and local governments to work together more effectively and efficiently to prevent, prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. In 2007, the City continued its efforts to integrate the National Incident Management System into its existing emergency management system by providing all staff with the appropriate level of NIMS training according to their level of responsibility during a disaster incident.

Noise Element

The Noise Element was adopted in 1992. A review of this element will be performed as part of the General Plan evaluation scheduled for 2008. Due to the nature of the guiding and implementing policies of the Noise Element, the efforts to implement this element of the General Plan are on-going. Projects are reviewed on a case-by-case basis for adverse noise impacts to the environment and sensitive receptors.

4. Housing Element Activity

The 2000-2008 Housing Element is designed to address the existing and projected housing needs across all economic segments of the community. The City Council adopted the 2000-2008 Housing Element in May 2001 after the Department of Housing and Community Development notified the City that the draft Housing Element was found to comply with State housing law.

During the reporting period, the Community Development Department continued implementation of the Housing Element's Housing Plan. This included completing a comprehensive review of the Housing Element's identified action items and initiating a number of Zoning Ordinance changes to meet the City's RHNA requirements.

Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA)

The current RHNA Plan was adopted by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Regional Council in July 2007. Under the RHNA Plan, each of the SCAG jurisdictions received an allocation of new housing units of which they are expected to facilitate construction on during the 2006-2014 assessment period. There are many ways to "facilitate" construction of these units. At a minimum, each jurisdiction is expected to provide land zoned to accommodate housing at the densities required to provide the total number of units and meet the affordability requirements mandated by State law. Table B (attached) identifies the residential development projects completed in the City of Lawndale between January 1, 2007 and December 31, 2007, categorized by income category.

Affordable Housing Categories and Income Limits

Affordable housing is broken down into four categories. Each category is based upon a percentage of median income for Los Angeles County (\$56,500), adjusted for household size. The income limits are updated annually by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and form the income eligibility limits used by the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). These household income limits, as defined by California Housing Element law, are:

- Very Low: Households earning less than 50% of median household income
- Low: Households earning 51% to 80% of median household income
- Moderate: Households earning 81% to 120% of median household income
- Above Moderate: Households earning over 120% of median household income

Qualifying income limits for each group are based on household size. HCD determined annual gross income limits for Los Angeles County households in 2007 are shown below.

Table 3: Household Income Limits

Income Category	Number of Persons in Household				
	1	2	3	4	5
Very Low	25,900	29,600	33,300	37,000	39,950
Low	41,450	47,350	53,300	59,200	63,950
Moderate	47,500	54,200	61,000	67,800	73,200
Above Mod					

Housing Production in Context with City Housing Policy

Production of affordable housing is facilitated by means of several specific City policies and the State Density Bonus Program. Primary City policies include the Residential/Commercial Mixed Use Policy, Residential Second Unit Policy and Condominium Conversion Policy.

2006-2014 RHNA Production Summary

For the current RHNA cycle, 55 total units have been constructed. However, of those units none fall within the affordable categories. During the reporting period (2007), 34 new units were constructed although none of these newly reported units are in the affordable categories.

Housing Production Expectations

Near term efforts in the present RHNA cycle will focus on identifying underutilized sites for higher density mixed-use and affordable housing development. The information collected from the Solimar Report on economic development strategies and during the

2008-2014 Housing Element Update will provide a starting point for identifying the vacant and underutilized sites which are anticipated to provide the sufficient land necessary to meet the current RHNA allocation. Combined with other affordable development efforts, such as density bonus incentives, residential second unit construction and non-profit projects, the City is capable of meeting the established RHNA target for the current housing cycle.

(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction	City of Lawndale
Reporting Period	1-Jan-07 - 31-Dec-07

Table A

Annual Building Activity Report

Very Low-, Low-, and Moderate-Income Units and Mixed-Income Multifamily Projects

Housing Development Information											Housing with Financial Assistance and/or Deed Restrictions		Housing without Financial Assistance or Deed Restrictions
1	2	3	4				5	6	7	8			
Project Identifier (may be APN No., project name or address)	Unit Category	Tenure R=Renter O=Owner	Affordability by Household Incomes				Total Units per Project	Assistance Programs for Each Development See Instructions	Deed Restricted Units See Instructions	Note below the number of units determined to be affordable without financial or deed restrictions and attach an explanation how the jurisdiction determined the units were affordable. Refer to instructions.			
			Very Low-Income	Low-Income	Moderate-Income	Above Moderate-Income							
(9) Total of Above Moderate from Table A2								34					
(10) Total by income units (Field 5) Table A			►	►	►	►	►	►	►				
								34					

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT
Housing Element Implementation
(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction City of Lawndale
Reporting Period 1-Jan-07 - 31-Dec-07

Table A2

Annual building Activity Report Summary for Above Moderate-Income Units
(not including those units reported on Table A)

	Single Family	2 - 4 Units	5+ Units	Second Unit	Mobile Homes	Total
No. of Units Permitted for Above Moderate		34				34

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT
Housing Element Implementation
(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction	City of Lawndale
Reporting Period	1-Jan-07 - 31-Dec-07

Table B

Regional Housing Needs Allocation Progress

Permitted Units Issued by Affordability

Enter Calendar Year starting with the first year of the RHNA allocation period. See Example.		Enter Calendar Year starting with the first year of the RHNA allocation period. See Example.										Total Units to Date (all years)	Total Remaining RHNA by Income Level
Income Level	RHNA Allocation by Income Level	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014			
Very Low	Deed										116		
	Restricted Non-deed restricted												
Low	Deed										72		
	Restricted Non-deed restricted												
Moderate	Deed										77		
	Restricted Non-deed restricted												
Above Moderate		21	34								55	148	
Total RHNA by COG. Enter allocation number:												55	413
Total Units		21	34										
Remaining Need for RHNA Period													

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Housing Element Implementation

(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction City of Lawndale
Reporting Period 1-Jan-07 - 31-Dec-07

Table C
Program Implementation Status

Program Description (By Housing Element Program Names)		Housing Programs Progress Report - Government Code Section 65583. Describe progress of all programs including progress in removing regulatory barriers as identified in Housing Element.	
Name of Program	Objective	Deadline in H.E.	Status of Program Implementation
Assist in Affordable Housing Development	Explore regulatory and financial incentives for profit developers; Evaluate processing procedures	2002	Mixed Use zoning was adopted to provide additional affordable housing development potential (2002). Density Bonus ordinance to be prepared by 6/30/08.
Density Bonus Ordinance / Affordable Housing Development Incentives	Provide additional sites for affordable housing	2001	Density Bonus ordinance to be prepared by 6/30/08.
Sites for Transitional Housing / Homeless Shelters	Provide adequate sites for homeless families and individuals in Lawndale	2001	An amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to allow for emergency shelters and transitional housing to be prepared by 6/30/2008.
Residential / Commercial Mixed Use	Re-evaluate mixed use opportunities within the Specific Plan for Hawthorne Boulevard	2002	The Zoning Ordinance permits R-4 residential uses in commercial zones. The Hawthorne Boulevard Specific Plan was amended to allow mixed use development within the Plan Area (2002).
Facilitate Development on Underutilized Sites	Encourage higher density housing in the appropriate zones	2002	The Hawthorne Boulevard Specific Plan was amended to allow mixed use development within the Plan Area (2002). A consultant was retained to develop economic development strategies for underutilized commercial properties (2007).

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Housing Element Implementation

(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction	City of Lawndale	Reporting Period	1-Jan-07	31-Dec-07			
Facilitate Residential Development on Vacant Sites					Encourage development of vacant sites, focusing on those permitting higher density housing	2002	Few vacant sites remain in the City. Recent and future residential development relies primarily on the redevelopment of underutilized properties; however, the City continues to provide vacant site information to interested developers.
Second Units					Continue to encourage construction of second units	2001	The City amended the Zoning Ordinance in 2006 to incorporate State law provisions for Second Units.
First Time Homebuyer Program					Provide downpayment assistance to 10 low and moderate income households on an annual basis	Ongoing	The City does not offer first-time homebuyers assistance programs due to limited funding available and the high prices of for-sale homes.
First Time Homebuyer Mortgage Assistance					Fully develop a program and advertise its availability.	2002	Due to the high costs of ownership housing and limited redevelopment housing set-aside funds available, the City has determined a City-funded homebuyer assistance program to be financially infeasible.
Fresh Rate Program					Assist households that would otherwise be unable to purchase a home	Ongoing	The sponsor of this program had not been effective in providing affordable homeownership opportunities. This program was discontinued.
Lease to Own Program					Assist households that would otherwise be unable to purchase a home	Ongoing	The sponsor of this program had not been effective in providing affordable homeownership opportunities. This program was discontinued.
Mortgage Certificate Credit Program					Continue the City's participation in the County's program	Ongoing	The City continued to participate in this County-administered program. Due to the high prices of homes, few households were able to qualify for this assistance.
Condominium Conversion Ordinance					Increase homeownership opportunities	Ongoing	Since 2000, 9 apartment complexes (totaling 40 units) were converted to homeownership. The ordinance was amended in 2006 as part of the revision of the residential development standards.

ANNUAL ELEMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Housing Element Implementation

(CCR Title 25 §6202)

Jurisdiction	City of Lawndale	Reporting Period	1-Jan-07	31-Dec-07		
Housing Rehabilitation Programs				Provide 10-15 loans and grants on an annual basis	Ongoing	Since 2000, the City has provided 38 loans and 51 grants to income-qualified households in Lawndale.
Section 8 Program				Provide rental assistance to lower income households	Ongoing	The City provides Section 8 rental assistance to 197 very low income households through the Los Angeles County Housing Authority.
Fair Housing				Continue to provide fair housing services	Ongoing	The City continues to offer fair housing services as a participating jurisdiction under the County's fair housing contract with the Housing Rights Center.